2: Gunn E-4 (no date) 1956 FF38 Katab FF38

nowhere any suggestion of specialization, each man generally making his own, with the possible exception of drums, which are often produced by men regarded more as ritual specialists than as craftsmen in wood. One of the chief occupations of women (apart from household duties) is petty trade, which, according to Meek, is carried on by the women on their own or their husbands' behalf. It takes the form of "the sale of excess supplies of millet and other crops, of firewood, and of beans. . ." For their weapons and tools and cloth, Katab appear to be largely, if not entirely, dependent on Hausa craftsmen in the area, for their pottery on their Ataka neighbours in Moroa Independent District. Hunting—in the absence of any considerable quantity of large game—is carried on rather as recreation (ritualized) than as an economic activity. Sylvan products in general—excepting palm-fibre and (if so classed) honey—are not exploited commercially to any extent, though both locust-bean and shea-nut trees are found in some quantity in the Katab tribal area.

Land Tenure: Crops

According to Cole, the Katab have little, if any, spare land. "All land in their area is claimed by some individual or family as his or their farm or fallow." Land hunger has apparently not yet set in; land can still be obtained freely on loan if one's inherited lands are insufficient. To secure a loan, a man brews and offers a special pot of beer to a landowner with fields (or fallow) to spare, who will normally accept the "gift" and grant the loan. Cole notes that "whereas in the past loans would never be for a specific duration, nowadays a loan is made for a specific period either for one, two or three years, after which the borrower would be offered another field, if this were available. . ." Sale, pledging, leasing or renting, on the other hand, are unknown. The complete right of the user and the passing on of his right are acknowledged, but no transaction which would deprive relatives and inheritors of this right is recognized. Examination of all available evidence fails to reveal any basic qualitative difference between what is termed "family," and what is termed "individual" tenure.

The extent of the average amount of land under cultivation appears to have remained more or less constant, at least since the Brice-Smith reassessment of 1922. He reported five acres as the average cultivated by the adult male: Meek reported the average acreage as "ranging from four to six"; Barnicott (1933) "the comparatively large area of eight acres" per family; Elliot (1943) "roughly an acre per adult male" in the "home farm" adjacent to the compound, "then, anything up to four miles away in the open country around the village," fields of undisclosed extent. Unfortunately, no figure for fallow per adult male is available.

The figure of *c.* 4 acres per adult male appears to be low,[10] but, as already indicated, it is not to be regarded as evidence of over-population; it does tend, however, to corroborate all reports that the soil of the area is extremely fertile. In the "household garden," according to Elliot, the following crops may be grown; beans,[11] *gwasa*, sweet potatoes, cassava, maize, okra, *gauta* tomatoes, tobacco, *rama*

[10] In the Birom Tribal Area of Plateau, where the soil is poor, Davies has estimated that three acres per adult factor (male or female, presumably) is minimal for subsistence. (Among the Birom, however, pressure on the land is, in some areas, extreme: at least two Birom Village-areas, and probably others, have in fact less than the minimum.) It may be noted that Brice-Smith reported the average acreage worked by the Hausa farmer in Zangon Katab District as four acres, that is, 20% smaller than the Katab average in 1922. This difference was attributed not to superior farming methods (especially since "those who can afford it hire pagan labour to till their plots") but to the fact that the Hausa domiciled in the District were primarily traders and craftsmen.

[11] Beans are, apparently, of some special significance. Early investigators declared them to be a staple crop, and the chief article of diet. It is the "home farm" or "household garden," apparently, which Meek designates "the women's bean gardens": "Every Katab woman has a farm of broad beans at the back of her hut grown on trellis-work. . . . Every married woman grows [beans] on her own account. With the proceeds of the sale of her beans a Katab woman usually adds to the number of her goats."

000 Political Memorandum 5, paragraphs 31(c) and 37.

14. In pre-British times the Emirate was run from its headquarters at Zaria and the surrounding area was divided up into fiefs, each fief having its specific boundaries and its particular obligations to the central authority. When the British arrived these fiefs were abolished. They were replaced by districts each with their paid District Head. As may be imagined these original fiefs paid little or no attention to the status of the indigenous inhabitants *qua* tribe. Neither, accordingly, did the original districts. In 1934, however, these districts were readjusted after detailed investigation and made to accord, as far as this was possible, with the variations in tribal structure. Where a district boundary cut across sections of various tribes the boundary was altered so that as many of one tribe would be incorporated in the same district as could conveniently be managed. Owing, however, to the many vicissitudes of these tribes in past years complete territorial adjustment was not possible. The extent to which the adjustment was accomplished is indicated in Appendix " B ". Any reference to ' tribal lands ' in this report must therefore be accepted with great caution and with the fact borne in mind that their boundaries, though established with great care and after detailed investigation, are nevertheless the direct result of administrative action affected many years after whatever ' boundaries ' may have originally existed had been completely compromised.

15. The same considerations apply to the Hausa enclaves, usually the District Headquarters, in the centres of these tribal lands. Their boundaries, as village units, were fixed, after investigation, by the administration and are a creation of that administration.

INDEPENDENT PAGAN AREAS

16. There are four Independent Districts—Moroa, Kagoro, Kwoi and Birnin Gwari. The Kagoro District was selected as a ' specimen ' district for detailed investigation. It is not to be taken for granted that what is written about Kagoro necessarily applies *in toto* to the other three districts. There would, no doubt, be discrepancies and variations. I have no reason to believe, however, that such discrepancies and variations would be anything more than points of detail. The broad pattern is similar in all four districts and the essentialities of the pattern do not change.

KAGORO DISTRICT

Population 162 [13] [311] Cultivable

17. The Kagoro district contains some 12,000 inhabitants of whom 2,600 are adult males. About a third of the district consists of massive rocky hills and probably less than two-thirds is actually

[p. 3]

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20. An explanation of this state of affairs is to be found in the historical background. In pre-British times when the Kagoro lived in the hills and came down to farm the plains it was the customary practice for a kindred or even a family group to farm lands in several widely dispersed areas and not in one compact block. The idea was that all the family eggs should not be in the same basket. If one particular area happened to be raided by the Fulani then, though the kindred or family might lose the produce of one particular farm, they would have other farms in other areas to fall back on; whereas had they been farming in only one place and in one compact block they would have lost everything they had. Consequently when the British rule brought peace and security the kindreds did not come down from the hills to settle in single compact blocks but came down to their split up and dispersed farms over the whole of the area. Whether or not the concept of a kindred holding of the land may have existed in the past it is certain that it does not exist now. It would have been undermined from the very start.

Breakdown to individual tenure.

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21. The breakdown has gone much farther than the kindred. Whereas up to about twenty years ago it could truthfully have been said that it was the exception to the rule to find a man and his immediate family living and farming on his own, it is now the exception to the rule to find an extended family or family group living and farming together. In two cases that were investigated in the field it was found that the " family " lands had been divided up while the father was still alive. In the one case the father was too old to farm and in the second had suffered an injury some ten years ago which had prevented him from carrying on strenuous farming. In both cases the father was relatively hale and hearty and quite alert of mind. Nevertheless they were both prepared, since they could take no active part in the farming of the land themselves, to wash their hands of the matter and give their adult children their portion of the family lands. The only say they retained in the matter was in respect of the minor's portion and the division of the fallow lands. Fallow would not be divided up until it was actually required when as much as was required would be allotted to the son and this would then come under his control. Discussion with responsible opinion confirmed that this was a general practice and was quite common and widespread.

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22. An interesting check on the above is available from the tax lists. These lists show, together with the name of each ' householder ", the name of each adult tax payer living in the compound. It was confirmed by the District Head and Elders that where in the list a number of adult males were listed

4: Cole G-5 (1948) 1949 FF38 Katab FF38
Kagoro

426 the land. This being so the fact that the borrower is prepared to
572 build a house on the land and be somewhat more than a bird of passage is proof positive of the extent of the friendship and therefore something to be encouraged—a relic of the days when farmlands were plentiful and abundant and every addition to the male strength of the community was much sought after and welcomed.

425 33. Apart from the three transactions described above no other transactions affecting land appear to take place and if they do take place they would not be recognised by customary law. Individual tenure may have become firmly established; but this tenure is not absolute and is subject to definite customary restrictions and limitations.

The Authority in land matters.

622 34. When living in their strongholds in the Kagoro hills, the
621 Kagoro had no single tribal chief. It would be extremely difficult, at this stage, to establish what, if any, the highest single socially cohesive unit might have been—clan, sept, kindred or family group. As pointed out in paragraph 21 above, however, this is of academic interest. Whatever may have been the unit in the past there
648 remains no discernible trace of it now. The district boundaries have
423 been established by the British Administration and so have
177 the village unit boundaries; a District Head and Village Unit Heads have been acknowledged and appointed and the unit is run as a tribal whole. There is evidence that parallel with the breakdown to individual tenure of the land there has been a definite development, by consent, in the new Tribal Authority's powers as regards land matters—the Tribal Authority in this case being the District Head acting with the advice and consent of his Elders. Whether or not this development is from within or a mere copying of neighbouring Emirate custom is hard to say. It exists and it is of equal interest to the development reported in paragraph 49 of Mr Rowling's Plateau Province Report, *i.e.*, " the recoil on to intensified control ". The following examples are pointers.

423 35. All farmable lands in the Kagoro district are allocated,
311 *i.e.*, are claimed by some person or persons as being lands originally cultivated by their own immediate ancestors and therefore inherited by them. This applies to ' bush ' as well as fallow. In the past, however, swamps and kurumis were considered as being of no use for farming purposes however useful they were as hiding places in
[197] the event of a raid. They remained communal. The introduction of rice and sugar cane cultivation has now altered matters. Swamp land can now be used. It is held that any member of the village unit within which the swamp lies has the right, without seeking permission from anyone, to take up such portions of the swamp as are sufficient for his needs. Any person from outside the village

unit, however, who wishes to take up a portion would have to seek the permission of the District Head. 423 311

36. Again, if a stranger comes into the district and lives there for a sufficiently long while to become accepted as one of the Kagoro themselves then he can be loaned land to build a house on by anyone who cares to lend him it. It is *loaned*, not given or sold. If, however, a stranger were to come to the district for the first time and wished to do the same thing the would-be lender would first of all have to obtain the District Head's consent. 609 423 426

37. There was an old site in the Agwan village unit formerly used by Railway Construction Workings. When the Railway Construction moved on to Kafanchan the Agwan villagers returned to the site. The site, however, was very convenient as a building site and the former District Head in consultation with his Village Heads decided to allocate it as such. This decision was accepted. More recently a farmer in the neighbourhood protested against a farm of his being so allocated for further plots. The Elders who were collected and consulted upheld the decision that the District Head was entitled to decide that the land should be used for this purpose and that custom would agree (cf. the Hausa proverb—*Gari ya kore gona*). Similar circumstances arose recently in the Kpak village unit where specific lands were ' set aside ' by the District Head for Hausa and Ibo enclaves. They did not want indiscriminate settlement by outsiders and so decided to keep them fixed in a specific area. 631 622 623 423

38. It must be remembered that in no one of these circumstances could the District Head be said to have acted in accordance with his traditional powers. He is not a traditional entity. He has acted as representative of and in consultation with his Elders who are the representatives of tradition and who, by consent, have acted in novel circumstances as they would have acted traditionally. It is of great interest to note that these somewhat primitive people seem to be in the process of evolving " central powers " very similar to those accepted by customary law in the Emirates. Whether or not, as mentioned above, this is from within or a mere copying it is difficult to say. It must be remembered, however, that they are somewhat backward people. the Elders are very conservative, have a considerable say in matters and are very independent minded. It is fairly certain that the District Head could not move in such matters without their definite consent. 631 622 623 167 423 609

39. Though there appears to be a certain amount of intermingling by and absorption of non-Kagoro elements coming Immigration.

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423 45. It is of interest to note that with these Jabawa the father would still appear to retain the right to refuse to sub-divide the family lands until after his death—a right not so readily acknowledged either by the Kagoro or Katabawa. It also appears, however, that this is a right which would very rarely ever be exercised. Should a married son demand his portion he would be given it without demur whenever he might choose to demand it.

423 46. Responsible opinion, even amongst the "magajin
476 dodo"—the traditional priests—who are the most conservative and staunchest supporters of traditional custom, held that this was accepted custom and had been long established. Their views on the subject are of interest. It is probably true, they say, that in pre-British times individual tenure did not take place to any very great extent; but that was not because it was against the custom. The only reason that kept families and family groups living and farming together on a communal basis was the necessity of the times—the continual threat of Fulani raids and wars. Now, however, there was peace and security; there was no longer any need for them to work together and, indeed, it was much more satisfactory for them to work apart. In the olden days if
423 any member of the compound did not pull his weight he would
476 be given a good beating by the others which he would accept and
627 then get on with his work. If this did not work the threat of handing him over as a slave to the Fulani most certainly would. Nowadays if anybody started beating another he would be taken to Court and fined; and there was no longer the threat of handing him over as a slave. The lazy member of the community could not therefore be made to work and that being so it was much more satisfactory that he should go away and farm on his own rather than that he should feed on other people's labours. A man would not want to work on his own if he were willing to work with the others. If he was not willing then rather than have an unwilling worker they would prefer him to go off on his own. So runs local opinion.

Sub-division.
423 47. The breakdown to individual tenure has brought with it sub-division but no perceptible increase in fragmentation. The latter has always existed. At the present moment sub-division has arrived at a state where any further large increase will prove embarassing. Local opinion does not consider this as an evil inherent in sub-division but as an inevitable consequence of increasing population. Whether or not a family worked together as a whole or individually the amount of land available would not
B10 be altered. Spare lands in these districts are conspicuous by their
B41 absence. All the land that is farmable has been taken up and in some places is kept in continuous cultivation with the aid of manuring.

000 73. Discussion of land tenure within this Hausa enclave is reserved for the section of the report dealing with Mohammedan Hausa tenure. We are here concerned with any deviations and divergences in this district's pagan tenure from that described in previous paragraphs.

Katab tenure breakdown to individual tenure.

74. Mr Barnicott, District Officer, reported in 1933:—

596 423 241 "Farming . . . . . particularly amongst the Katabawa is carried out on a semi-patriarchal basis. Nearly all the farms of each household belong to the head of the household and are handed down from generation to generation. The householder may not—and often does not—work on the farm himself but, as the owner, makes himself responsible for all the tax of the household; the junior members of the family and the women do the work and since the product of their labour is not strictly their own are not encouraged to accept responsibility for payment of tax".

● [311] "The comparatively large area of seven acres is farmed by the average Katab family".

"The farm is run as a family concern and its produce cannot be apportioned . . . . . to each of the individual tax payers varying from one to as many as five or six who work on it".

75. Mr Elliott, District Officer, writes in 1943:—

"Each householder has a home farm in the immediate neighbourhood of his house. The home farm amounts to an area of about one to four acres—roughly an acre per adult male in the household. Then, anything up to four miles away in the open country round the village the householder has his main farm".

[592] "The size of the household is surprisingly small, perhaps indicating a recent tendency for families to split up and farm separately. The average household . . . . . consisted of an old man . . . . and a son who does all the farming who may perhaps be helped by a younger brother who is too young to pay tax. Out of the 142 farms surveyed the total number of the tax paying (*i.e.*, adult) farmers working them was no more than 205".

361 592 162 76. The following figures compiled from the 1947 tax lists (*see* paragraph 22 above) are of interest:—

Katab	(*a*) Average number of adult males per household	2.1
	(*b*) Largest number of adult males per compound	11

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